

DISTRIBUTION OF THE REFORMED CHURCH.

The Presbyterian, or Reformed Church, is widely distributed among the nations of the earth. It is represented by many ecclesiastical organizations, independent of each other as to government, method of administration and executive agencies. The formal bond of union among these is "The Alliance of Reformed Churches Holding the Presbyterian System" which is not clothed with legislative or executive powers. A common bond of faith is found in the Scriptures as interpreted in their creeds and confessions and known as Calvinism. These various churches are also organized under a particular form of government which is known as Presbyterian. In minor features of administration and statement of doctrine there is much diversity.

As indicating the distribution of the Church in independent bodies corresponding to our General Assembly, there are in Continental Europe the following: In Austria, one; Austria-Hungary, one; Belgium, two; France, two; Germany, two; Holland, three; Italy, one; Switzerland, four. In Great Britain there are two branches of the Church in England; four in Ireland; six in Scotland; one in Wales. The several Presbyterian bodies of Canada have now become united in one. In the United States there are ten separate sections or divisions of the great Presbyterian family, varying in membership from a million and a quarter to only a few thousand. In South America there are the Presbyterian Church of Brazil and the Presbyterian Church of Uruguay. In the West Indies is the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Jamaica. In South Africa there are six divisions of Presbyterianism. India, China and Persia each has a Synod or General Assembly. Japan has three divisions of the Presbyterian Church; Australia has six independent Synods, or General Assemblies; New Zealand has one, and the New Hebrides, one.

These various divisions of the Reformed faith represent more than twenty millions of adherents and in every land where these adherents are found they are the exponents of the best intelligence and the strongest and purest character to be found in those lands. Indeed, we justly claim that the Reformed faith has been the pioneer of enlightenment, of liberty and virtue in the progress of the modern world. This much may be said, while realizing that at the same time there is much still to be desired, and which should be earnestly sought, in the departments of doctrinal integrity, more complete organization, and increased zeal in evangelizing the unsaved.

The wide distribution of the Church affords exceptional opportunity for giving the Gospel to the whole world. The Church is a perpetual witness to those nations in the midst of which it is established. Its great commission is to testify. From present centers of influence its light should radiate into the regions beyond until every land shall be made to hear its voice and consider the claims of its messages upon the intellectual assent and the faith of the world. To this end much may still be done in systematizing and coordinating the mission work of the Reformed Churches as they are now organized in many parts of the earth.

HELPING ONE ANOTHER.

We are members one of another. Christ the Head makes the church his members. In any evil or difficulty that befalls one, all suffer. In any inefficiency or weakness that characterizes one all the rest more or less share. From these facts, as well as from the direct command of God, is born the duty of helping one another. In ministering to any one in Christ's name we are ministering to him.

Paul unfolds the duty beautifully. His first principle is this: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Others' need may grow out of their weakness, and their weakness may be quite inexcusable and unreasonable; but that does not absolve us from duty. Just because we are strong we can afford to be generous and charitable, and especially to be helpers of others rather than pleasers of ourselves.

Paul's second principle is, "Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification." In the exercise of loving helpfulness and Christian character let us ever have regard to spiritual results, and strive to make our ministration of such a nature as to prove an incentive to the weaker to seek higher things. There is a lifting, a building up, in wise, tactful helpfulness.

Paul's third principle is, "For even Christ pleased not himself." The Master lived not for himself but for others. It was their pleasure, their good, their constant edification that he sought, not his own happiness. The servant of Christ who lives for others and not for himself has his Master's spirit. He will even take the reproaches that would fall upon his brethren and lovingly bear them, for their sake and his Lord's.

Paul's fourth principle is, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." All the array of saints of the olden time, and all the riches of their experience and triumphs should tell us the story of love. Their history should remind us of the infirmities of human nature, of the trials and temptations to which we are heir, and of the need of all to go to God's word for patience and comfort and hope.

Paul's fifth principle is happily expressed in the prayer, "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus." The source of true kindness and helpfulness on our part towards others is God. To him we must go for the grace to do for others according to his will, and from him will come the grace of likemindedness which will make us love others as ourselves.

Paul's sixth principle is, "That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The end of Christian helpfulness is to bring glory to God. The supreme end of living and of all the relations and duties of life is his glory. That is the chief end of man. It should be the controlling motive in everything. Dominant in us it will make us all work together that we may cast all our crowns at Jesus' feet.

And Paul's seventh principle is, "Wherefore receive